

CALIFORNIA POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION COMMISSION

PRESS RELEASE



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Teacher Education Reform Policy Forum in Capital

May 9, 2001– Sacramento – The State’s higher education planning and coordinating body, the California Postsecondary Education Commission (CPEC) will host, along with the Western Interstate Commission on Higher Education (WICHE), a policy round table discussion on *The Changing Role of Higher Education in Preparing California’s Teachers*.

The policy forum will take place Thursday, May 10th from 9:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the Sheraton Grand Hotel, 1230 J Street, Sacramento. Approximately 30 individuals representing a broad spectrum of the education and legislative communities have been invited to participate.

“This policy forum is one of several initiatives of the Commission to engage policy makers, elected officials, and educators in a public dialogue on issues facing the State and its educational future,” said Commission Chair Alan Arkatov.

Sponsored by CPEC and WICHE through a grant from the Ford Foundation, the forum will explore how higher education is responding to the challenge for an unprecedented number of new credentialed teachers and for ensuring that the teachers who enter the profession are adequately prepared. State Senator Dede Alpert, who chairs the Joint Committee to Develop the Master Plan for Education – Kindergarten through University, supports the forum and will address the group.

Current national projections are for 2.2 million new teachers in the next decade, or more than 200,000 new teachers every year for the next 10 years. In California, the projected need is between 250,000 to 300,000 new teachers during that same period, or 25,000 to

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30,000 new teachers per year. The demand for more teachers in California public schools is due to enrollment increases, increased retirement of teachers, general attrition, and most recently, efforts to reduce class size.

“If we are to meet California’s future educational, economic and social needs,” said Warren H. Fox, the Commission’s executive director, “higher education must consider among its top priorities the training of teachers who can teach a rapidly growing and diverse school-age population and meet the State’s higher expectations for student performance.” Fox is also a WICHE Commissioner.

The forum will identify current educational policy efforts and examine how those initiatives are affecting the preparation of teachers. The objective of the discussion will be to develop a framework for assessing how higher education has been, and can continue to be, responsive to the challenges to prepare an increased number of more fully qualified teachers for California’s elementary and secondary schools.

Fox stated, “There has been much activity, effort, and focus by both policymakers and educators around the critical topics of teacher preparation, continuing development, and supply in recent years. We believe strongly that a dialogue about higher education’s changing role is both timely and important and will help us assess where we are, the challenges that remain, and how to best provide a policy environment to address the future.”

Based in Sacramento, CPEC (<http://www.cpec.ca.gov>) is an independent non-partisan statewide body. It provides the legislative and executive branches of government with advice on, and information about, major policy and planning issues concerning education beyond high school. In cooperation with educational systems and agencies, CPEC leads public discussion on important topics, develops policy recommendations, brings key parties together, and makes progress in emerging issues. It is also California’s postsecondary education information clearinghouse. CPEC has 16 members, nine of whom represent the general public, five who represent the major systems of California education (the California Community Colleges, the California State University, the University of California, the independent colleges and universities, and the State Board of Education), and two student representatives

The Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (<http://www.wiche.edu>) and its 15 member states, including California, work collaboratively to expand educational access and excellence for all citizens of the West. Its various programs are working to find answers to some of the most critical questions facing higher education today. WICHE is the only organization of its kind in the West that focuses exclusively on higher education issues, from access and accountability to tuition and fees to distance learning and innovation, providing hard data on the trends as well as analysis.

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